



**NEWS
RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Land of Enchantment Welcomes New Mexico's Second-Largest Solar Facility

—NRG Energy, El Paso Electric and First Solar join with New Mexico state and local officials and friends to dedicate the opening of the Roadrunner Solar Generating Station—

SANTA TERESA, NM; October 7, 2011—NRG Solar, a subsidiary of NRG Energy, Inc. (NYSE: NRG), El Paso Electric (NYSE:EE) and First Solar, Inc. (Nasdaq: FSLR), welcomed New Mexico's top officials at their 20 megawatt (MW) Roadrunner Solar Generating Facility to mark the start of energy production from the state's second-largest photovoltaic (PV) project.

"Today marks another step towards American energy independence with the completion of the Roadrunner Solar Generating Facility," said John Sanchez, Lieutenant Governor of New Mexico. "This 20-megawatt photovoltaic project is diversifying New Mexico's economy and creating good paying jobs for our state. I want to thank NRG Energy, El Paso Electric and First Solar for making this investment in New Mexico and look forward to their future ventures using the Land of Enchantment's most bountiful resource, the sun."

"I am excited to welcome this type of industry to Dona Ana County. It's a whole new sunny world," said Dolores Saldaña-Caviness, Doña Ana County Commission

The Roadrunner project created more than 200 jobs during its construction over the past nine months and now is generating electricity to supply thousands of homes with clean, renewable power.

"The completion of the Roadrunner solar facility is a major milestone for the New Mexico border region," said Secretary of Economic Development Jon Barela. "This builds on all the momentum taking place in the region due to the coming together of many entities for the economic development success of Santa Teresa, including NRG Energy, El Paso Electric and First Solar and we are thrilled to have the Roadrunner solar project and this partnership here as a part of the community."

"This new project is a good example of an economic development opportunity that is characterized by high-technology and a renewable resource that is plentiful in southern New Mexico – sun," said Jerry Pacheco, Vice-President, Border Industrial Association. "We congratulate NRG Energy, El Paso Electric and First Solar on this milestone and the door it opens to new possibilities for our region."

The facility is located on a 210-acre privately owned parcel of industrial-zoned land near Santa Teresa, about 10 miles from El Paso, Texas.

"The Roadrunner project owes its successful completion to the high levels of support, cooperation and enthusiasm from many people across New Mexico," said Tim Hemig, Vice President of Development for NRG Solar. "The people here in Santa Teresa and in the capital of Santa Fe have made us feel very welcome and we're looking forward to making contributions both to New Mexico's renewable energy goals and to the community as one of its newest corporate citizens."

The Roadrunner facility will use a single-axis tracking system, which pivots PV solar panels to follow the sun throughout the day, increasing electricity production compared with a fixed tilt installation. Cost-competitive, renewable power generated by the Roadrunner facility will be sold to El Paso Electric under a 20-year power purchase agreement.

"We're pleased to add the energy produced by the Roadrunner Solar Generating Facility in Santa Teresa to our renewable energy portfolio," said David Stevens, El Paso Electric CEO. "Our 20-year contract to purchase the power from this facility marks our largest commitment to solar energy research, education and utilization in our area."

First Solar provided engineering, construction and procurement services for the project using its advanced thin film photovoltaic solar modules, and will also be the operations and maintenance contractor for the facility.

"First Solar applauds NRG and El Paso Electric's commitment to renewable energy," said Matthew Merfert, First Solar Engineering, Procurement, and Construction Project Manager. "We are pleased that the Roadrunner project will be able to provide clean, affordable solar electricity to New Mexico residents for years to come."

Roadrunner is the third large-scale solar generation plant NRG has brought online to date—totaling more than 86 MW—and its first outside California.

About NRG and NRG Solar

NRG Energy, Inc., a Fortune 500 and S&P 500 Index company, owns and operates one of the country's largest and most diverse power generation portfolios. Headquartered in Princeton, NJ, the Company's power plants provide more than 25,000 megawatts of generation capacity—enough to supply approximately 20 million homes. NRG's retail businesses—Reliant Energy and Green Mountain Energy Company—serve nearly 1.9 million residential, business, commercial and industrial customers.

NRG Solar LLC, a subsidiary of NRG, has more than 2,000 MW of photovoltaic and solar thermal projects under development or in construction across the southwestern United States. With major investments in solar and wind power, as well as electric vehicle

infrastructure, NRG is working to help America transition to a clean energy economy. More information is available at www.nrgenergy.com and www.nrgsolarenergy.com.

NRG Energy Safe Harbor Disclosure

This news release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933 and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. Such forward-looking statements are subject to certain risks, uncertainties and assumptions and include NRG's expectations regarding the Roadrunner Solar Project and forward-looking statements typically can be identified by the use of words such as "will," "expect," "believe," and similar terms. Although NRG believes that its expectations are reasonable, it can give no assurance that these expectations will prove to have been correct, and actual results may vary materially. Factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those contemplated above include, among others, general economic conditions, hazards customary in the power industry, weather conditions, competition in wholesale power markets, the volatility of energy and fuel prices, failure of customers to perform under contracts, changes in the wholesale power markets, changes in government regulation of markets and of environmental emissions, unanticipated outages at our generation facilities, the inability to access other financing arrangements, the inability to implement value enhancing improvements to plant operations and companywide processes, our ability to create and maintain successful partnering relationships.

NRG undertakes no obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. The foregoing review of factors that could cause NRG's actual results to differ materially from those contemplated in the forward-looking statements included in this news release should be considered in connection with information regarding risks and uncertainties that may affect NRG's future results included in NRG's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission at www.sec.gov.

About El Paso Electric

El Paso Electric is a regional electric utility providing generation, transmission and distribution service to approximately 379,000 retail and wholesale customers in a 10,000 square mile area of the Rio Grande valley in west Texas and southern New Mexico. El Paso Electric has a net dependable generating capability of 1,791 MW. El Paso Electric's common stock trades on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol EE.

About First Solar, Inc.

First Solar manufactures solar modules with an advanced semiconductor technology and provides comprehensive photovoltaic (PV) system solutions. The company is delivering an economically viable alternative to fossil-fuel generation today. From raw material sourcing through end-of-life collection and recycling, First Solar is focused on creating cost-effective, renewable energy solutions that protect and enhance the environment. For more information about First Solar, please visit <http://www.firstsolar.com>.

For First Solar Investors

This release contains forward-looking statements which are made pursuant to the safe harbor provisions of Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. The forward-looking statements in this release do not constitute guarantees of future performance. Those statements involve a number of factors that could cause actual results to differ materially, including risks associated with the company's business involving the company's products and services, their development, distribution and performance, economic and competitive factors, the company's key strategic relationships, the ability to obtain permits from governmental authorities for the project and litigation and other risks detailed in the company's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. First

Solar assumes no obligation to update any forward-looking information contained in this press release or with respect to the announcements described herein.

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